

**HEALTH CARE**

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# Dr. Drew warns over marijuana studies revealing 'extremely worrisome' data

Chances of developing bipolar, schizophrenia disorders rises 50% after cannabis use, study shows



One of TV's [favorite medical personalities](#) is weighing in on the "extremely worrisome" findings coming from a recent study on marijuana use.

"When this first started coming up, I actually was somewhat doubtful. It seemed too much to me," addiction medicine specialist Dr. Drew Pinsky said on "[The Bottom Line](#)" Friday. "We were always aware that cannabis was associated with psychotic episodes, but the previous suspicion was it was primarily people who were sort of heading that way already, perhaps that's why they were using the drug."

But according to data from recent analysis and studies, people who have had at least one psychotic episode [after using cannabis](#) are almost 50% more likely to develop schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, and that the risk is even higher for teens and young adults.

"Particularly in the states where it's legal for recreational use, the concentration of the cannabis is so spectacular, it's approaching 100% that, literally, it's a different drug, it has a different effect on people," Dr. Drew explained. "And now, very commonly, we're seeing hyperemesis, people that develop these vomiting episodes that are uncontrolled."

"It's very common from weed," he continued. "And psychotic episodes have become increasingly common to the point that they're actually kind of characteristic features to the psychosis these kids are getting from the weed."

A 2017 American Journal of Psychiatry study found that the risk of developing bipolar or schizophrenic disorders [was highest for cannabis users](#) aged 16 to 25, and had a greater influence than alcohol, opioids, amphetamines and hallucinogens.

This week, [an analysis from Truveta](#) spotlighted how the rates of cannabis-use disorder diagnoses were more than 50% higher in November than compared to the same time in 2019. There was also a nearly 50% increase in the number of cannabis-related emergency room visits.

Twenty-five U.S. states have decriminalized and currently recognize [marijuana as a recreational drug](#), which Dr. Drew cautioned can open doors for easier access for young adults.

You're fighting a profound cultural bias where they literally have been taught to believe that tobacco is significantly worse than cannabis, and they're right in terms of alcohol, in terms of impact on overall health, in terms of being carcinogenic, in terms of lost work years, yes, the cumulative effects of alcohol are measurably worse than cannabis. But cannabis is also bad," he said.

"Now that we have such incredibly high concentrations of cannabis," Dr. Drew added, "we're starting to see a real problem with really unanticipated psychotic episodes and more addiction. I have family members that are in recovery from cannabis addiction."



### Marijuana legalization is a 'huge mistake': Kevin Sabet

Former White House drug policy adviser Kevin Sabet argues that high-potency marijuana leads to an increase in mental illness and psychosis on 'Varney & Co.'

The mental health and addiction expert added that he personally knows the "devastating consequence" of marijuana substance abuse, seeing lifelong panic disorder firsthand.

"I don't believe there's any such thing as a bad chemical. I think there are things that are risks with any chemical that humans relate to," Dr. Drew said. "And you just have to understand those risks."